

My connections examined the portrayal of alienation in mainstream society. I chose to use texts from a modern time period to help create more concrete conclusions about mainstream society. My texts were Education for Leisure by Carol Ann Duffy, Sad Joke on a Marae by Apirana Taylor, District 9 directed by Neill Blomkamp and Barton Fink directed by Joel Coen. I expected all of my texts to be able to reflect one another as they were all from a similar time period. In particular, I expected District 9 and Sad Joke on a Marae to draw similar points as they are both texts that illustrate alienation towards indigenous people, with Sad Joke on a Marae being about Maori, and District 9 being about the treatment of blacks in South Africa (but doing this by using a proxy, which in this film are aliens ('Prawns')). I also thought that Education for Leisure and Barton Fink would create similar conclusions as they are both texts that explore alienation of a single person from mainstream society due to that own persons delusions and thoughts.

Across all texts the reason for alienation was due to some kind of difference to the norm. In Sad Joke on a Marae, Tu has been alienated from his culture and heritage because he has stopped following his culture completely and has become different. In Tu's case, and in the case of many other Maori, this difference was caused by European Cultural Imperialism, but it is still differences from his culture and heritage that has caused the alienation (1). "Above me the Tekoteko raged, he ripped his tongue from his mouth, and threw it at my feet." Through Tu's Europeanization he cannot speak his own language and because of this he is not considered a real Maori. This is the same idea as in 'Education for Leisure'. The speaker is different to the rest of society as he/she is slightly ignorant and deluded. The same goes in Barton Fink. Barton Fink is deluded and self-righteous, believing himself to be above society and an incredible writer, whom the world could not live without. Because of this, society sees him as different, and he then becomes alienated because of this (2). In the same film, Barton's neighbor, Charlie Meadows, is alienated. He too is also seen as different in both his appearance and personality. He is always very loud and overly friendly, which mainstream society often refuses to accept on face value as genuine. Charlie is therefore alienated by society, but also is alienated by Barton Fink, because Barton sees himself as above Charlie (3)(this is shown by Barton's constant interruptions of Charlie and disregard for Charlie's view and profession). This alienation from Barton is very interesting as it also increases his own alienation because Charlie obviously resents how Barton sees himself as superior. Due to these connections, I determined that alienation within mainstream society mainly is caused by difference, and is directed at those who are different. However those who have been alienated by society can also further alienate each other (4).

Across my texts, the one main reoccurring consequence of alienation was violence. This was in relation to both those alienating and those being alienated (5). In Education for Leisure the speaker kills all living things he/she can get his/her hands on. "I squash a fly against the window with my thumb", before finally, at the end of the poem, taking a knife and going out onto the street to stab someone. The speaker was driven to violence by alienation. The speaker is alienated from society because the speaker is no longer a part of society after finishing school the speaker has no job, his/her only purpose is to "sign on" the dole and sit at home becoming bored and deluded, "I am a genius. I could be anything at all, with half the chance. But today I am going to change the world. Something's world. The cat avoids me. The cat knows I am a genius, and has hidden itself." Society alienates the speaker and the speaker alienates him/herself through these delusions. Once the speaker "has had enough of being ignored" the speaker turns to violence for attention and warped revenge on society(6). This violence is caused indirectly by the alienation, as the resulting emotions and delusions cause the violent response from the speaker. In District 9,

a lot of violence is caused by alienation This is a far more blatant example of it though, as those being alienated are literally aliens. They are shunned and discriminated against by society because they are so different in the way they look and communicate .Because they are not human they are not afforded human respect. They are alienated in a shanty town called District 9 where they must find ways to survive in abhorrent conditions. Large amounts of violence occur throughout the film where the authorities enter District 9 regularly to keep control. Aliens and their young are treated suspiciously and remorselessly shot if suspected of minor infringements . These two texts both indicate that alienation does cause violence, both for the alienators and the alienated (7). One final text that confirmed this was Barton Fink. Charlie becomes so fed up and angry about how is being alienated and (although he is already seen to be mentally unstable) cracks. He shoots and kills two police investigators, and it is insinuated that he has killed others also. All of these acts of violence across these texts can be easily linked together, and all linked back to alienation. This is why I determined that the main obvious consequence of alienation upon both parties (the alienated and the alienators) is violence (8).

There are many conclusions that are revealed about mainstream society and alienation from my texts. Each text generated its own separate points and thoughts about society and alienation, and many of these crossed over and connected with other texts. In Education for Leisure, we can determine many things about society and its education system. For example, society's educational system is alienating those who go through it and alienation can easily lead to delusions such as arrogance, self- absorption and megalomania. In this text, the speaker has become deluded in part because of the education system, and not understanding the content, but also because of the alienation being inflicted upon them. These revelations about society, although specific to Education for Leisure, can also be linked to other texts. Delusions like arrogance and self- absorption play a huge part in Barton Fink. Barton Fink has become alienated from society and becomes extremely self- absorbed and arrogant (9). He thinks he is a genius, and when he gets writers block, he become very agitated and self- absorbed in what he is doing. In a way he alienates himself from society, but this goes into a loop, where society begins to alienate him also (10). Society's alienation causes and reinforces his delusions, which is similar to Education for Leisure (11). There are other conclusions that can be drawn from other texts also. For example, Cultural Imperialism features in both District 9 and Sad Joke on a Marae. In District 9 it can be seen as intergalactic imperialism, where humans attempt to change and control the aliens ('Prawns') when they arrive here. Their way of life and customs are replaced with the negative aspects of human life, and this helps to cause the alienation against them as a whole. The same is referenced in Sad Joke on a Marae(12). During Tu's greeting, he speaks about negative aspects of European culture, and these have replaced his knowledge of his own culture and heritage. These two examples from these texts illustrate that cultural imperialism can lead to alienation from society. These are the two main revelations I was able to draw about society and alienation; that society can cause people to develop delusions, and that cultural imperialism created by a society leads to alienation upon others by that same society.